



## BEGINNER'S CORNER

### WASHING HANDWOVEN FABRIC EXCERPED FROM JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2005, PAGE 14

**M**achine wash, gentle; machine dry.” “Wash by hand.” Even though these instructions seem clear, what exactly do they mean? Here are a few tips.

For cotton (and other cellulose) fabrics, first test dyefastness by soaking the different yarn colors in warm water with a small white fabric scrap to see if the colors run. If the dyes are fast, it is safe to wash the fabric in your washing machine on a gentle cycle, warm water, cold

rinse, with about five minutes of agitation. If the dyes are suspect, you can machine wash the fabric but don't allow it to sit in water or to remain wet. Roll immediately in dry towels to squeeze out water and then press until dry.

For wool (and other protein-fiber) fabrics, it is usually safest to wash by hand. If you want the fabric to look very much like it did on the loom, submerge it in cool water, allow it to soak for a few minutes, gently squeeze the water through it,

and rinse without agitation in water of the same temperature, either under the faucet or in two or three baths. Roll in a towel to squeeze out water and lay flat to dry. If you do want fulling to occur (see page 29), you can wash the fabric by hand in warm water and agitate (imitate washing machine action). You can do this in the machine (warm water, gentle), but check once per minute to make sure it doesn't full too much and become stiff.

—Madelyn